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V.—THE UNREAL CONDITIONAL SENTENCE IN PLAUTUS.

I.

THE USE OF THE IMPERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE FOR THE PRESENT UNREAL.

It is assumed with reason that the present subjunctive was the main, if not exclusive, expression for the present unreal sentence at some time in the pre-literary period of the Latin language, and that the imperfect subjunctive, at this early period, had its normal past-tense force, and shared with the pluperfect subjunctive the province of the past unreal conditional sentence.¹ This view is supported by the actually existing state of affairs in Homeric Greek; for there the present optative is used for the present unreal, while the past unreal finds expression in the imperfect and aorist indicative (with sporadic cases of the optative). Goodwin² denies that the imperfect indicative has yet begun to take on the function of the present unreal condition, which is its province at a later period. Further evidence looking in the same direction may be found in the development of the idiom in Latin. After Plautus, the present subjunctive rapidly drops out of use as the expression of the present unreal condition, and is replaced by the imperfect subjunctive, which, in turn, gives up the hold that in the early writers, it still has on the past unreal condition. This development seems to imply that Plautus is in a stage of transition—that, before his time, the present subjunctive was used more, and the imperfect less, as the expression for the present unreal conditional sentence. Finally, the Homeric use of the present optative³ and the Sanskrit use of both that mode and the subjunctive⁴ for this type of sentence would seem to indicate that the present subjunctive was the most natural speech-form at the command of the early Roman for the expression of the present unreal condition.

¹ Cf. H. Blase, *Geschichte des Irrealis* (Erlangen, 1888), p. 1.

² *Greek Moods and Tenses*, §435.

³ Goodwin, *Greek Moods and Tenses*, §438.

⁴ Whitney, *Sanskrit Grammar*, §§81, and b.

The change of function on the part of the imperfect subjunctive in Latin, and of the imperfect indicative in Greek, presents an interesting and perplexing problem, and one for which, I think, no final answer has yet been proposed.¹ At least a part of the trouble with the solutions that have been advanced is the neglect of one or more of the following indispensable conditions of a satisfactory theory :

(1). It is absolutely essential to clear thinking on this subject that the *grammatical* and the *psychological* aspects of the question be sharply distinguished in the mind of the investigator. It is one thing to determine when and how men came to *think* in the unreal form, and quite another to explain the history of the *form of words* used in the expression of that class of conditional thought. As I have elsewhere² shown, the Romans were *thinking* their unreal conditions clearly enough, and were able to make the hearer catch the meaning even when the present subjunctive was used, long before the imperfect subjunctive was settled upon as the exclusive *speech-form* of the present unreal condition. Aside from the proof there given, the same thing may be assumed on general principles, for the adaptation of these past tense-forms to this type of conditional sentence is a late process in language, and we can hardly assume that thought was crude and undeveloped at the time the change took place. It is probable then that, in attempting to answer the question under discussion, we should think of the present and past unreal thought-forms as fixed, and of the imperfect subjunctive as leaving to the pluperfect the old function which it had shared with it, and passing over to the expression of the present unreal conditional sentence. Any theory that attempts to explain the new use of this mode and tense by a concomitant evolution of the unreal thought categories, stands upon a very unstable base, for Latin at any rate.

(2). In proposing a theory to explain the change in the use of the imperfect subjunctive in Latin, some attention must be paid to the similar change found in Greek and in the Germanic

¹ Cf. Blase, *Geschichte des Irrealis*; Greenough, *Harvard Studies*, Vol. VII; E. H. Miles, *Comparative Syntax of Greek and Latin* (Cambridge, 1893), additional note, p. cxxvii. A summary of other views may be found in an article on the Spanish conditional sentence by E. Gessner, *Zeit. für Roman. Phil.*, xiv. p. 23 ff.

² *Class. Rev.*, xv., p. 51.

languages. That these three branches of the I. E. stock should have, late and (apparently) independently, worked out this process so similarly, creates a strong feeling that there may be a fundamental underlying cause that holds good for them all. Hence a theory that seems to explain the facts of Latin very well, but breaks down utterly when applied to Greek, needs very strong proof of its validity before it can be received with confidence.

(3). The theory advanced must be in accord with the laws of simple unconscious growth in language. Upon this rock has split many a brilliant hypothesis. The validity of any theory is in doubt if it cannot bear the scrutiny of the question: Is the process here assumed conceivably a description of what might actually take place in language growth, and are there any simple well-established parallels in which such a process has actually taken place? I feel that we sometimes expect the true explanation to be so abstruse and far to seek that there is danger of overlooking a simple (and perhaps true) one lying close at hand; in actual fact, the secret of some changes may be found in a thing so simple as phonetic decay or a leveling by analogy. A striking case of this last appears in the subsequent history of the unreal speech-form, when the indicative in Old French takes the place of the Latin subjunctive in the *si*-clause. The entrance of the indicative into the protasis of the unreal conditional sentence seems due to the analogy of the many *si*-clauses that use that mode, for in cases where *si* is omitted or repeated by *que* the original subjunctive is still retained in the unreal condition.¹

Keeping in mind the above necessary conditions of a valid theory, it now remains to find some way of explaining the change by which the imperfect subjunctive in Latin came to leave its early function and finally became the accepted expression for the present unreal conditional sentence. If an explanation is to be sought which may apply to Greek and the Germanic languages as well as to Latin, it must be sought in something common to all these languages. The obviously common factor is the unreal thought-form. If the key to an explanation does lie in the unreal thought-form, it is to the *past* rather than to the *present* unreal

¹ O. M. Johnston, *Modern Language Notes*, xiv, p. 270 ff. Compare what Sweet has to say of the history of the speech-form in English; *New English Grammar*, §§2280-2.

that attention should be first directed.¹ I hope to show that there is a peculiarity of this past thought-form which may serve to explain how its original speech-form (imperfect subjunctive) first became *associated* with the present idea, and, later, *identified* with it. The past unreal conditional sentence, strictly speaking, has no tense-force of its own, but it is opposed to, or reflects, the time of various past realities. In the nature of things, the time of past events is not all of one kind; sometimes it concerns only one point (aorist), at others it is continuous (imperfect); sometimes it implies a present result or continuance (perfect definite). The past unreal conditional sentence can reflect any of these time aspects.² For instance, one man might say to another, 'You are very hard on that foster child,' and the other reply, 'If he had not deceived me on the day he entered my home, I should have loved him as a son.' In this sentence the protasis is opposed to a reality of the aoristic variety, but the apodosis is opposed to a reality that extends all the way from that point of time up to, and including, the present. In fact, the same sentence might perfectly well be used in reply, if the first speaker's remark be taken

¹ At this point I part company with other investigators. Partly as the result of the unclearness arising from a failure to differentiate speech-form and thought-form, many have tried to account for the use of a past tense-form as the expression of the present unreal thought-form either by stretching the present unreal thought-form a little or by finding in it some implication which might be brought out by the use of a past tense-form. For the first of these see Blase, *Geschichte des Irrealis*, p. 16; Dittmar, *Studien zur Latein. Moduslehre* (Leipzig, 1897), §300, takes almost the same view, 'Wer einen Irrealis ausspricht, versetzt sich nämlich jedesmal in die Vergangenheit, wenn auch in eine, die nur um ein paar Sekunden zurückliegt.' On the other hand, it is sometimes claimed that there is an implication of *impossibility* in the unreal thought, and that this justifies the use of a past tense-form, since a past tense implies impossibility of fulfillment. (See Blase, l. c. p. 14). I trust that the method of attacking this question which I am about to outline above, may appeal to the reader as more in accord with the working of the laws of language growth, and hence, more likely to be correct.

² Examples of the perfect definite variety are of special interest for this discussion, Cicero, *Phil.* II. 36. 90; *Qui tu vir, di immortales, et quantus fuisses, si illius diei mentem servare potuisses!* *Phil.* X. 4. 9; *Si enim C. Antonius, quod animo intenderat, perficere potuisset, . . . Macedoniam . . . perdidissemus.* p. Mur. 13. 29; *In qua (defensione oratoris) si satis profecissem, parcius de eius laude dicerem.* In the first two cases the thought so clearly includes the present that the author resumes with the imperfect subjunctive in the clause that follows. Cf. *Livy* XXI. 40. 1 (*supersedissem*), *Tac. Agr.* 34 (*constitisset*); *A. J. P.* XXI. p. 268 ff.

as referring strictly to some special instance of harshness *in the present* (rather than to the attitude in general); in that case the reply is a defence of the *present* position primarily, and its present force is very clear.

This is the open door through which the imperfect subjunctive in Latin may have first become associated, and then identified, with the present unreal thought-form. Even as late as Plautus, past tense usage in general is not very sharply differentiated, and it is very likely that, at the time the imperfect and the pluperfect subjunctive were the accepted expression for the past unreal condition, these tenses were used more or less interchangeably. In certain cases the imperfect or the pluperfect chanced to be opposed to a past reality of such a nature that there was nothing to keep the hearer from thinking of the present as well as the past. The next step would be to use these past tense-forms when *consciously* including both past and present. In the stages following, as the past speech-form came to be used as the expression of an opposition to realities whose past aspect was less prominent than the present, and, finally, to those whose thought was purely present, the imperfect gained upon the pluperfect and became the chosen expression for the present unreal conditional sentence. That the imperfect rather than the pluperfect should make good its claim on the present meaning is not to be wondered at in view of the fact that the imperfect and the pluperfect naturally form a pair—the pluperfect is, ‘so to speak, the perfect of the imperfect.’¹ In Greek, the choice of the imperfect indicative rather than the aorist may have to do with the fact that the imperfect is more closely bound to the present, being made on the same stem.

That this development of meaning outlined for past tense-forms is quite possible and in accord with the laws of language growth is shown by the quite parallel and well-established process by which a perfect form like *novi* takes on present meaning. The perfect definite meaning ‘I have become acquainted with’, implies the present result ‘I know’; this associates that past form with a present meaning, thus opening the door to the use of that form *when only the present result* is thought of, i. e. *novi* comes to be used freely like a present, with a loss of feeling that it is properly

¹ Gildersleeve-Lodge Latin Grammar, §241.

a past.¹ To the Latin student, it would be very interesting to examine the earliest cases of the imperfect subjunctive which show a distinctly present meaning, but this is denied us. In Plautus the process is so far advanced that few cases can be found where the old proper past meaning surely occurs—the imperfect subjunctive is pretty well established in its new function. Homer, however, seems to be just at the critical point of change in the function of the imperfect indicative, and the theory above proposed may be examined in the light of his usage.

There seems a general agreement among Greek scholars that the imperfect indicative in this idiom refers to continued or repeated past action.² It is possible that it does more than this, as may appear from the following examples:

Od. iv. 178-9;

καὶ κε θάμ' ἐνθάδ' ἔόντες ἐμισγόμεθ'· οὐδέ κεν ἡμέας
ἄλλο διέκρινεν φιλέοντε τε τερπομένω τε.

On this passage Goodwin³ quotes Monro as saying 'the imperfect *ἐμισγόμεθα* takes in the present time, *we should* (from that time till now) *have been meeting*.' In criticism of this he adds, 'It seems to me that, according to the Homeric usage, we can find no more

¹ The fact that the perfect definite in general allows a primary sequence shows how inherent is present force in this tense-use.

² I can hardly refrain from noting that it seems to me a mistake to insist, as Ameis does, that, in so early an author as Homer, this tense is always sharply differentiated from the aorist, that is, is always restricted to continued or repeated past action. Certainly such a claim is unreasonable in the case of ἦν, for there is no aorist form to use. See also Od. iv. 732 ff.;

εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼ πυθόμην ταύτην ὁδὸν ὁρμαίνοντα·
τῷ κε μάλ' ἢ κεν ἔμεινε καὶ ἐσσύμενός περ ὁδοῖο,
ἢ κέ με τεθνηκῖαν ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔλειπεν.

Ameis explains the imperfect *ἔλειπεν* ('he would have left me dead') as denoting continued action; but what of the aorist *ἔμεινε* ('he would have remained')? I think that a person with no prepossession for either meaning would have settled on *ἔμεινε* rather than *ἔλειπεν* as an expression denoting continuance. I am aware that this is not an altogether simple case, for the verb meaning of *μένω* implies continuance, and in the following line the unreality lies not in *ἔλειπεν* but in *τεθνηκῖαν*. But even so, I am not satisfied by Ameis' explanation of *ἔλειπεν*. If early Greek usage is anything like that found in Latin, I should not be surprised to find aorist and imperfect in this idiom not so far differentiated but that Homer could use as suited his verse either *ἔμεινε* or *ἔμενε*, *ἔλιπε* or *ἔλειπε*.

³ Greek Moods and Tenses, §435, foot-note.

in *θάμα ἐμισγόμεθά κε* than *we should have had frequent meetings*, and the rest comes from the context.¹ Goodwin denies (l. c.) that the imperfect in Homer is ever used in the present unreal conditional sentence, but even he admits that, in this case, there is nothing to prevent the hearer from thinking of the present as well as of the past ('and the rest comes from the context'). This is the first step in the development outlined above for a past unreal form to take on present meaning. Monro seems to have felt (and I am not at all sure but that the feeling was right) that Homer has taken a second step—that Menelaus is here represented as *consciously* expressing opposition to a reality of the perfect definite type, and intends to include the present as well as the past.²

Od. v. 311;

τῷ κ' ἔλαχον κτερέων, καὶ μὲν κλέος ἦγον Ἀχαιοί·

Here Odysseus, in fear of perishing in the sea, has just expressed the wish that he had fallen in the battle over Achilles' body; line 311 tells what would have happened in that case (τῷ). The first clause of the line is apparently opposed to a reality of the aoristic variety 'I should have enjoyed funeral honors,' but the case of ἦγον seems different. Odysseus may well have been thinking of the present as well as the past. Perrin, in his school edition, feels the present force so strongly here that he renders in his note '*would be carrying*, wherever they went, *i. e., spreading or cherishing*.' In any case, this too is a situation in which the hearer would be justified in feeling a present force, even granting that the original speaker was not thinking of this especially himself.

Od. xiv. 61-2;

ἦ γὰρ τοῦ γε θεοὶ κατὰ νόστον ἔδησαν,

ὅς κεν ἔμ' ἐνδυκέως ἐφίλει καὶ κτήσιν ὅπασσεν.

In this passage the swine-herd Eumaeus is talking to (the unrecognized) Odysseus, expressing the opinion that the gods

¹ In the second edition of his *Homeric Grammar* (§324) Monro adopts Goodwin's statement of the usage in this idiom.

² At the end of his foot-note Goodwin adds 'a nearer approach to the later usage perhaps appears in Il. xxiv. 220; *εἰ μὲν γὰρ τίς μ' ἄλλος ἐκέλευεν, ἴφ any other (had?) commanded me.*' In this passage Priam means to emphasize the fact that the command is from Zeus and must be obeyed. The unreality lies not in *ἐκέλευεν* (for he *has* been ordered), but in *ἄλλος*; a fair rendering might be 'if it *were* some other that *had bidden* me.' In such a case I should not care to insist on present force for the imperfect.

are keeping his master from returning home, and telling how different is the treatment he would have received at the hands of Odysseus, had he remained at home, from that which he has received and is receiving at the hands of the suitors (l. 58 ff.). The question is, what is the meaning to be assigned to ἐφίλει? Eumaeus is apologizing because he cannot offer his guest better cheer (ll. 58-9), and it is hard to believe that he is not contrasting his *present* evil plight with what would have been (*i. e.*, would be) his favored position, if his master had not gone away. At any rate, there is nothing to prevent the hearer from feeling that the present is included.

I trust that these examples serve to help make clear my meaning. If we are willing to go no further than Goodwin, insisting that Homer never uses the imperfect indicative for the present unreal condition, still there are certain cases in which the circumstances are such that there is nothing to keep the hearer from thinking of a present continuance; in the last case cited the circumstances are such as to almost compel the hearer to a consciousness of that aspect of the meaning. Possibly Homer has gone one stage further, and the speakers are to be thought of as using a past tense-form in certain cases with a conscious inclusion of the present. In either case, the fact that some passages wake doubt in us, the late-born readers, as to the precise time intended, is evidence that these passages must have been more or less ambiguous to the Homeric hearers, and that the door was open for a shift of meaning which developed a specific speech-form for an important class of conditional sentences. For the theory I have proposed no sweeping claim is made. It may turn out to be only a partial explanation. But in any case it is worthy of careful consideration in view of the principles and the method which underlie it.

II.

A COMPARISON OF THE USES OF THE PRESENT AND IMPERFECT SUBJUNCTIVE.

As noted in the first part of this paper, the present subjunctive in the time of Plautus was still largely used for the present unreal conditional sentence, though the imperfect subjunctive was rapidly moving up and relieving it of that function, thus tending to restrict it to the ideal (or less vivid future). In this part of the paper I shall examine rather carefully the cases that use the present sub-

junctive, with a view to determining the underlying thought-form in a given case, and, at the end, make a comparison of Plautus' use of this tense (as contrasted with the imperfect) for the unreal conditional sentence. This will involve a study of two special varieties of this type of conditional thought.

As a preliminary consideration, it is necessary to make clear what is understood by the terms 'ideal' and 'present unreal.' The fundamental difference is, I think, one of *time*. The present unreal deals with a *fancied existent*¹ with implication of *unreality*, and the ideal with a *fancied future*.² In addition to this, two idiomatic uses need to be noted.

Capt. 307-9;³

Et quidem si proinde ut ipse fui imperator familiae
Habeam dominum, non verear ne iniuste aut graviter mi imperet.
Hegio, hoc te monitum nisi forte non vis volueram.

In this passage I think that most English readers would feel it natural to interpret *si . . . habeam* as unreal, if for no other reason than that (according to my own definition) it is hard to detect any future force in the phrase. But there is an idiomatic use of the Latin future that might find an exact parallel here.

Ep. 646-7;

hic sunt quadraginta minae.
Siquid *erit* dubium, immutabo.

The sense is 'If any of it *proves* (i. e. shall prove) doubtful', looking ahead to the time when the money will be examined.

Men. 799-800;

si ille quid *deliquerit*,
Multo tanto illum accusabo quam te accusavi amplius.

Here Menaechmus' *past* deeds are in question, and the meaning is 'If he *shall prove* to have committed any wrong.' This use of the future indicative is well established, and there seems noth-

¹ 'Existent' rather than 'present,' because the latter term is so apt to be understood in this connection as referring to only a moment of time. How inadequate the definition, so interpreted, would be, can be seen from such a phrase as 'If black were white.'

² I reserve, for the present, the question of the distinction between the ideal and the simple future conditional sentence. By the definition given above possibility, objective or subjective, is rejected as the distinguishing feature of this class of conditional sentence. The definition is intended to be purely *psychological*—not a description of anything and everything that finds expression in the *present subjunctive*.

³ References throughout are to the text of Goetz and Schoell.

ing to hinder the same interpretation for a subjunctive that refers to the future. Thus *si . . . habeam* might mean in the passage above 'If I *should prove* to have such a master as I myself was.' This interpretation is more in accord with the conciliatory tone of the whole passage than to take the sentence as unreal. This latter sense would make Tyndarus imply that Hegio is not as good as he himself was, and is somewhat inconsistent with Hegio's cordial attitude (*loquere audacter*, l. 310.) It is possible, then, that in a case like this, an instinctive drawing toward the unreal form may be misleading, and due to the influence of idiomatic tense use on the part of the Latin.¹

The second point concerns the English preference for verbs that denote a state in the unreal condition, and for those that denote action in the ideal. Thus we say 'If you *knew*,' but hardly 'If you *should know*'; in the ideal, 'If you *should learn*' comes much more readily to the lips.² In the same way, but less strongly, we pair 'If I had' and 'If I should obtain (get.)' One with this feeling, meeting *si scias* in Plautus, wants to interpret it as unreal simply because he shrinks from 'If you should know;' the real alternative is 'If you should learn.'

Mil. 309-10;

hocine si miles sciat,

Credo hercle has sustollat aedis totas atque hunc in crucem.

This is spoken by a slave pondering whether or not to tell, hence 'If the soldier *should learn* of this,' cf. Poen. 885 and

Cicero, Phil. II, 30. 76;

ne tu iam mecum in gratiam redeas, *si scias* quam me pudeat.³

si sapias is another phrase that suggests the unreal form readily, but seems shut away from the ideal. 'If you should be wise' or 'If you shall be wise' are intolerable, but the Romans evidently had no such feeling.

Rud. 1391;

si sapias, tacebis.

cf. Bacch. 1001-2, Tri. 559; Terence, Heaut. 594.

We seem to use 'If you *are* wise' rather loosely with a future sense in certain connections.

¹ Cf. Cicero, p. Cael. I. 1.

² That Latin had no such feeling on the case of *scio* is shown by the use of future forms; Aul. 773, Mil. 860.

³ Cf. Livy, Praef. §1, *si sciam*. Conversely, the Latin use of verbs of action in unreal sentences seems to us a little harsh. A. J. P. XXI, p. 272.

A. Uses of the Present Subjunctive.

In Plautus there are about eighty¹ examples of conditional sentences containing the present subjunctive in protasis and apodosis. Of these, a certain number are of course ideal. Their futurity is indicated in various ways, ranging from the use of temporal particles to the general situation.

Capt. 203-5;

TYN. At nos pudet quia cum catenis sumus. LOR. At pigeat *postea*
Nostrum erum, si + vos eximat vinculis
Aut solutos sinat quos argento emerit.

Aul. 233;

Neutrubi habeam stabile stabulum, siquid divorti fuat.

Here marriage is being contemplated. Any *separation* must be in the future.

Cf. Capt. 416-7;

Si ego autem memorem quae me erga multa fecisti bene,
nox diem adimat.

More or less obviously ideal are Asin. 458-9, Bacch. 57, 697, Ep. 451-2, Men. 1023, Merc. 405-6, Mil. 309-10, Pers. 206, 374-5, Tri. 885-6, Truc. 767; Ps. 338-9 contains a perfect form.

A second group of sentences are those whose thought-form it is impossible to determine. I even go so far as to think that in some of these cases the speaker himself may not have made a conscious use of one thought-form rather than the other, for, at times, there is nothing at stake to force a distinction either in the mind of the speaker or of the hearer. Our use of 'would' and 'should' in the apodosis of both ideal and unreal sentences may serve to put us in touch with the feeling of the Roman for his ambiguous speech-form—the present subjunctive in both members. Suppose an orator should say 'A great navy *would* be a great advantage to this nation.' If he were stopped at that point and asked whether he meant that the country would be better off, if it had the navy *at the time of speaking* or that it would be better off if it should procure one *at some future time*, I can conceive the original being spoken under circumstances

¹ This number could be largely increased by including doubtful cases, i. e., such as have forms in *-am* and *-ar* in one or both members, and those whose apodoses may have some subjunctive value apart from the conditional idea of the sentence in which they stand, e. g., *velim* and interrogative sentences.

such that the man himself would not know which he did mean; as a matter of fact he would not be forced to a choice, for the real thought he wished to convey to his hearers may be no more than 'This country is in need of a great navy.' But he makes use of a rhetorical device—a conditional speech-form—which he has heard used in like connections, to convey his thought, and, whether the sentence be interpreted as ideal or unreal, the thought *is* conveyed. The complexity of the process that would lead a person in a case like this to make use of such a conditional speech-form to convey his thought seems to indicate that the connection between thought and language is not as exact and direct as some have supposed. In Plautus there is a little group of moralizing passages in which the speaker voices his discontent with the present state of morals or the like. All of these take the present subjunctive, and most of them could be interpreted either as ideal or unreal without loss to the thought; perhaps the speaker and his hearers were a little misty about the precise conditional thought-form.

Tri. 217-20;

Quod si exquiratur usque ab stirpe auctoritas,
Unde quidquid auditum dicant: nisi id appareat,
Famigeratori res sit cum damno et malo:
Hoc ita si fiat, publico fiat bono.

Ps. 427-8;

Homines qui gestant quique auscultant crimina
Si meo arbitratu liceat, omnes pendeant.

Merc. 823, 826, 828-9;

Utinam lex *esset* eadem quae uxoris viro.
Ecastor faxim, si itidem plectantur viri,
Ut illae exiguntur quae in se culpam committunt,
Plures viri sint vidui quam *nunc* mulieres.

In the first of these passages the speaker conveys the thought 'Gossips should be punished,' whether we interpret the conditional sentence to mean 'If we *had* such a law' or 'If we *should pass* such a law, it would be a blessing to the state.' Cf. Aul. 478 ff., Mil. 1436 ff., Pers. 73 ff. and perhaps, Truc. 324-5.

The second case quoted in full is like the first except that the getting of the power (*si . . . liceat*) is so improbable that it is hardly likely to be looked at as a future possibility. This, in a way, shuts the case up to the unreal form, and the speaker may have been more or less conscious of that fact. The third case, on the

other hand, the speaker perhaps felt as ideal. The evidence for this is found in the contrast afforded by *esset* (823) and by *nunc* (829.)

Besides these moralizing passages there are several other cases of the present subjunctive in which the speaker's essential thought is conveyed whether the sentence be interpreted as ideal or unreal. The speaker may have felt these cases as definitely one or the other, but there seems no way of getting at the thought, if that be true. It is possible that the spoken language afforded some help we do not find on the written page. Amph. 904-7, Aul. 539-40, Capt. 632, Curc. 223-4, Ep. 589, Merc. 874, Mil. 293, 1429, Tri. 474, Truc. 616-7.

The unreal sentences form the last and (for this discussion) most interesting group. It seems to be taken for granted that the presence of *nunc* is sure evidence that the present subjunctive is the expression of the unreal thought-form; but *nunc* as well as *iam* sometimes refers to the future.¹ In protasis its force is hard to determine.

Ps. 415-7;²

Si damnoseis aut si de amatoribus
Dictator fiat *nunc* Athenis Atticis,
Nemo anteveniat filio credo meo.

This might mean 'If a dictator should now be appointed' (future.)

Tri. 63-4;

Habeas ut nactus: nota mala res optumast.
Nam ego *nunc* si ignotam capiam, quid agam nesciam.

Here a proposition to trade wives is being rejected. Why not 'If I should now take?'

Asin. 188-9;

Si ecaster *nunc* habeas quod des, alia verba praehibeas.
Nunc quia nil habes, maledictis te eam ductare postulas.

In this passage it is the second *nunc* that proves the unreality of line 188; for that line standing alone would bear either interpretation. This becomes perfectly clear when it is remembered that the idiomatic rendering of the *si*-clause in the ideal form would be 'If you should now *get*.' Cf. Most. 912-4. In one case a pronoun seems to compel a reference to the present rather than to the future.

¹ Undoubted cases are Tri. 156, 859, Merc. 927.

² See Blase, *Geschichte des Irrealis*, p. 15.

Bacch. 1039-40:

Verum, ut ego opinor, si ego in istoc sim loco,
Dem potius aurum quam *illum* corrumpi sinam.

The use of *illum* shows that the si-clause means 'If I *were* in your place' and not 'If I *should be* in (i. e., get into) such a predicament as yours'; in this latter case some general expression like *filium meum* would be in order.

Still another test has been hinted at. Sometimes a contingency is so unlikely that we can hardly conceive of the speaker as regarding it among the future possibilities; this, in a way, shuts up a given sentence to the unreal form. But even when these tests have done all they can, there still remain cases which do not answer to them, and which we yet instinctively (and rightly) feel are unreal. This feeling has its root in some special uses of the unreal conditional sentence, and I now turn to a consideration of these.

The gist of many conditional sentences is, 'If this takes place, something follows.' In the unreal form this becomes a speculation or assertion as to what would happen, if things *were* or *had been* so.

Cas. 811;

Edepol, ne tu si equos esses, esses indomabilis.

Bacch. 496;

Melius esset me quoque una si cum illo relinqueres.

However, all present unreal conditional sentences are not of this type; for the unreal conditional sentence, by its very nature, implies the reality of the facts to which its protasis and apodosis are opposed, and language generally has availed itself of this peculiarity to make the unreal conditional sentence the vehicle of a thought that is no longer primarily conditional, but whose essence lies in the realities opposed and the relation they sustain to each other.

1. *The Explanatory Use.*

St. 592-3;

EP. Edepol te vocem lubenter, si superfiat locus.

GE. Quin tum stans obstrusero aliquid strenue.

So far as form goes l. 592 could mean either 'I should be very glad to invite you, if there should prove to be a place to spare, or 'I should be very glad to invite you, if I had a place to spare. The reply in l. 593 leaves no doubt that the unreal sense is the one communicated to the hearer, for he replies, 'Oh, if that's the

case (*tum*), I shall be quite content to bolt something *standing*.¹ To attempt to fit this reply to the first interpretation makes nonsense of the passage. In the remark of the first speaker the apodosis and protasis are opposed to, and imply, the realities 'I do not invite you' and 'I have no place to spare.' The obvious relation between these two is 'I do not invite you *because* I have no place to spare.'¹ The conditional sentence as such is not the thing of primary importance here—Gelasimus does not care what Epignomus *would* do if the present state of affairs did not exist; but what the conditional sentence implies—that Epignomus is excusing himself from inviting him to dinner on the ground that his table is full—this touches him very closely, and to this he addresses his reply, in which he shows that the lack of a place at the table is no good reason (in his case) for withholding the invitation to dinner. As a description of its function, I have applied the name 'Explanatory' to this sub-type of the unreal conditional sentence.

Inasmuch as this peculiar use of the conditional sentence arises because it is unreal, we may assume as unreal those conditional sentences which we feel perform a like function, i. e., sentences (like the one above), which stand in such a context that they are manifestly an explanation of, or apology for, an existing state of affairs.

Bacch 46;

Nam si haec habeat aurum quod illi renumeret, faciat lubens.

Bacch. 635;

Si mihi sit, pollicear.

Ep. 331;

Si hercle habeam, pollicear lubens.

Merc. 591;

Ni ex oculis lacrumae defendant, iam ardeat, credo, caput.²

¹ Or, 'The only reason I do not invite you is that I have no place to spare.' This type of sentence is much used (as in the present passage) to excuse someone from doing what he is asked or expected to do. The reason implied for not doing is intended by the speaker to be a sufficient one. Hence the full implication is 'I *cannot* invite you, because, etc.' I give the more general interpretation above not to obscure the fundamental by the incidental. The general situation, the speaker's tone of apology and the presence of such defining words as *lubenter*, are the outward expression of this added moment.

² Of course, humorous. Charinus has just said that he is on fire with love within, and adds that he supposes that the only thing that keeps his head from burning is his tears.

Ps. 274;

Misereat, si familiam alere possim misericordia.

St. 190;

Vocem te ad cenam, nisi egomet cenem foris.

St. 479;

Non graver, si possiem.

Bacch. 636 a, Capt. 238, Cist. 45, Mil. 1371, Rud. 1418-20.

2. *The Inferential Use.*

Mil. 1254-6;

MI. cur non pultas?

AC. Quia non est intus quem ego volo. MI. Qui scis? AC.
Scio edepol + facio:

Nam odore nasum sentiat, si intus sit.

In l. 1256 the realities opposed are 'My nose catches no perfume' and 'He is not within.' The obvious connection is 'My nose catches no perfume; *therefore*, he is not within'; for Acroteleutium is telling how she *comes to the knowledge* that the soldier is not in the house. This is another sub-type of the unreal conditional sentence in which the primary value lies not in the conditional thought-form itself, but in the realities implied by protasis and apodosis and their relation. This relation in the case of the explanatory was one of *cause* and *effect*; here it is one of *ground* and *inference*, hence the name 'Inferential.' In this type of unreal conditional sentence the unreality of the apodosis is treated as unquestioned, and from it is inferred the unreality of the protasis; e. g., (in the passage quoted above), the speaker is proving that the soldier is *not* within from the *lack* of the smell of perfume that always accompanies him. This readily falls into the form of a syllogism. 'The soldier scatters perfume wherever he goes—I do not detect it here—Therefore he is not within.'¹ This use affords a more clear-cut test of the unreal thought-form than does the explanatory use.

Cist. 96-7;

Nam si ames, extempulo

Melius illi multo quem ames consulas quam rei tuae.

Perhaps to be included are Men. 110-1, 504,² Pers. 215.

I hope that this description of the Explanatory and Inferential will make more tangible the ground for the feeling that certain of

¹ See further A. J. P. XXI, pp. 264 ff.

² Uses a perfect form (*noverim*) with present meaning.

the cases that use the present subjunctive are unreal to speaker and hearer.

B. Uses of the Imperfect Subjunctive.

Omitting doubtful cases, as was done in the discussion of the present subjunctive, there are 27 examples of conditional sentences in Plautus which have the imperfect subjunctive in both protasis and apodosis. It was found that a large number of the present subjunctive cases had to be classed as doubtful because of the difficulty of deciding between ideal and unreal, either interpretation expressing well enough the speaker's essential thought. In only three or four cases does Plautus make his conditional thought-form clear in such situations by the use of the imperfect subjunctive.

Bacch. 496;

Melius esset me quoque una si cum illo relinqueres.

Asin. 592;

Aliquanto amplius valerem, si hic maneres.

In either of these examples had Plautus made use of the present subjunctive, it would have been very hard to determine the thought-form. Cf. Aul. 286, Ps. 1236.

The presence of *nunc* in the apodosis of Rud. 801-2, and the unlikelihood that the protasis of Cas. 811 would be viewed as a future possibility, would perhaps stamp these cases as unreal even though the present subjunctive had been used. Bacch. 486 ff., 916 ff. seem to refer to the past. The remaining cases (19), with perhaps two exceptions, are Explanatory and Inferential.

1. Explanatory.

Asin. 196-7;

AR. Ubi illaec quae dedi ante? CL. Abusa; nam si ea durarent mihi
Mulier mitteretur ad te, numquam quicquam poscerem.

Asin. 674-5;

et si hoc meum esset, hodie

Numquam me orares quin darem. illum te orare meliust.

Mil. 1262;

MI. Non video. ubist? AC. Videres pol, si amares.

Most. 844;

Nam egomet ductarem, nisi mi esset apud forum negotium.

Pers. 45;

Si id domi esset mihi, iam pollicerer.

Ps. 640;

Si intus esset, evocarem.

Bacch. 554-5, Ps. 1320. This last example is somewhat complicated, but evidently is an explanation of Pseudolus' present attitude, and hence falls under this heading. Verging toward the explanatory sense are Rud. 202-3, 552-3. Asin. 678 and Aul. 439-40 are explanatory, but may refer to the past.

2. *Inferential.*

Asin. 860;

Pol ni vera ista essent, numquam faceret ea quae nunc facit.

Merc. 382-3;

Res adhuc quidem hercle in tutost. nam hunc nescire sat scio
De illa amica: quod si sciret, esset alia oratio.

In two cases it is impossible to tell whether the reference is to the present or the past.

Cas. 555-6.

Verum autem altrovorsum quom eam mecum rationem puto,
Siquid eius esset, esset mecum postulatio.

Tri. 115;

Haec, si mi inimicus esset, credo haud crederet.

Referring to the past are Amph. 525-6, Aul. 742, Poen. 691-2. Cf. Cas. 910.

Perhaps the most interesting result of this examination of Plautus' use of the present and imperfect subjunctive is the bringing to light the fact that, in the use of the imperfect tense, about two-thirds of the cases are either explanatory or inferential, whether we deal with those only which refer to the present or include those also that refer to the past. It is impossible to divide into clear-cut classes the cases that use the present subjunctive, and say that so many are ideal and so many unreal. If that could be done, it would be possible to determine the proportion of explanatory and inferential in the sum total of the unreal, and thus make a comparison with the proportion found to exist in the use of the imperfect subjunctive. Though this exact comparison cannot be made, still a survey of the field leaves a strong impression that the proportion for the present subjunctive is less

than that for the imperfect. If this be true, the reason is not far to seek. The present subjunctive had been and still was, to a large extent, the accepted speech-form for the unreal as well as the ideal conditional sentence. Accordingly, in cases where the speaker was not forced to a conscious choice of a conditional thought-form, or his audience would arrive at his essential thought whether his words suggested to them the ideal or the unreal thought-form, he naturally chose the old familiar speech-form. In only three (possibly five) cases does the speaker, in a situation of this sort, make clear by the use of the imperfect subjunctive that he is thinking in the unreal form. With the explanatory and inferential uses the case is different. Here the very essence of the meaning consists in the sentence being understood as unreal; hence the desirability of a speech-form to make this clear—the imperfect subjunctive was such a speech-form, now coming into use and ready to hand. It would be little wonder if it should prove to be true that there was a tendency to take advantage of it in cases of this sort, though the old speech-form, spoken in the proper tone of voice, could make the meaning clear. Interesting in this connection as showing the tendency to use an unambiguous speech-form for these special unreal uses is *Men.* 195;

Nam *si amabas*, iam oportebat nasum abreptum mordicus.

This is inferential, tending to show that Erotium affection is only simulated. Similar, but referring perhaps to the past, are *Ps.* 286, *Rud.* 379-80.

Another matter of interest is to determine to what extent Plautus has adopted the imperfect subjunctive as the speech-form of the present unreal conditional sentence. This can be done roughly by comparing the absolute number of explanatory and inferential cases which find expression in the present and imperfect respectively, making some allowance for the possibility that these types appear in somewhat larger proportion in the imperfect. In the present subjunctive 13 explanatory cases were found; to these must be added, in this comparison, 12 examples¹ that use forms in *-am* or *-ar*. Of the inferential there are 2 (or 5) cases; to these 2 are to be added for the same reason as above (*Merc.* 489, *Men.* 640.)

¹ *Asin.* 393, *Curc.* 58, *Merc.* 286, *Mil.* 878-80, 1284-6, *Poen.* 877 (*noverim*), 971, *Ps.* 377, *Rud.* 196-7, *St.* 508, *Tri.* 628-9, *Truc.* 299.

In the imperfect subjunctive were found 8 (or 10) explanatory and 2 (or 4) inferential. Combining these, the present subjunctive shows 29 (or 32), and the imperfect 10 (or 14) cases. From this we may assume that the present subjunctive is used by Plautus for the present unreal conditional sentence three times, where the imperfect is used once. With such a foot-hold as this, doubtless the imperfect subjunctive made rapid progress in displacing the present.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

H. C. NUTTING.